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ABSTRACT

A survey questionnaire, based on 88 titles identified elsewhere as popular adolescent reading, was given to 172 students with the intent of determining whether there were observable sex differences in the students' choice of books. Information sought included: (1) whether girls and boys enjoy reading for pleasure; (2) what books are enjoyed by both sexes; (3) what books are enjoyed by one sex; and (4) whether movies and television influence the choice of books for leisure reading. Books read and enjoyed are listed in separate tables by sex and by grade. Results show that the majority of students read and enjoyed only a portion of the selections on the survey. It is suggested that librarians and teachers promote reading as a leisure activity, and that librarians provide a well stocked, browsable collection of paperback books since this format seems to be popular with the age group. The questionnaire is appended. (Author/AP)

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A LEISURE READING INTERESTS SURVEY OF LAKE DALLAS JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

A PAPER

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR

THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF LIBRARY SCIENCE

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF

LIBRARY SCIENCE

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BY

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DENTON, TEXAS

MAY, 1977

IR 005 103

PREFACE

This paper was submitted to fulfill partial requirements for the course, "Literature for Young People," Library Science 5623, Spring term 1976, Ms. Hazel Furman, professor.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

What adolescents are reading, when they are reading, is a question that often enters the minds of librarians and teachers who work with this age group. Another aspect of this question is, what are boys reading and what are girls reading? The September 1975 issue of School Library Journal "invited subscribers to comment on whether they found observable sex differences in the escape reading of girls and boys."[1]

Librarians across the country responded and "with one exception, all did see dividing lines between boys' and girls' leisure reading--girls still hankering for family stories and romances and boys head straight for sports books and wartime adventure."[2] The one dissenting opinion was from a school librarian in Minneapolis who stated, "My observation of young people's reading tastes indicates that the heretofore wobbly boundary between

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[1]Jane Abramson, assistant editor, "Up For Discussion," School Library Journal 22 (September 1975): 32.

[2]Ibid.

masculine and feminine reading interests is rapidly disappearing."[1] The following research study is an outgrowth of these two opposing views of adolescent reading preferences.

Statement of the Problem

What are adolescents, seventh, eighth, and ninth graders, reading and are there observable sex differences in their choice of books for pleasure or leisure time reading?

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to compile data on books enjoyed by junior high school students, using a list of eighty-eight titles. To do this, data were collected, through a student questionnaire, to answer the following questions:

1. Do girls and boys this age enjoy reading for pleasure?

2. What books on the survey are enjoyed by both male and female readers?

3. What books on the survey are enjoyed by one sex?

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[1]Sister Avila, "Up For Discussion," School Library Journal 22 (September 1975): 32.

4. Are books that are made into movies or television films popular?

5. Where do junior high school students obtain the books that they read for pleasure--from the school library, the public library, or a personal source?

6. What other titles, not included on the survey list, are enjoyed by these adolescents?

Definition of Terms

1. "Adolescence" is the time of life between puberty and maturity; youth.

2. "Adolescent novel" is a book written by a serious writer for the teen-age reader. This type of book satisfies some of the youth's emotional and psychological needs by throwing light on the problems of adolescence.

3. "Leisure reading" for this study is reading done outside of class and not for assignment.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students at Lake Dallas Junior High School in Lake Dallas, Texas.

CHAPTER II

RELATED LITERATURE

Over the years, there have been a great number of formal and informal studies of adolescent reading interests and tastes. Researchers, as well as librarians and teachers, have conducted surveys to discover what adolescents were reading and why. The results of many surveys have indicated that there is a wide gap between the reading interests of boys and girls.

A reading interest survey was conducted in the early part of the twentieth century. The committee reporting on the survey concluded that up to eight or nine years of age, there is little difference in the reading interests of boys and girls. At the ages of twelve and thirteen, there is the greatest divergence of reading interests. "Ninety-five per cent of the seventh and eighth grade boys prefer adventure, while seventy-five per cent of the girls prefer love stories."[1] The committee also concluded that "the sex instinct is the

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[1]"The Reading Interests of Boys," Elementary English Review (November 1926): 292.

directive force in the choice of literature through the 'teens.' Adult fiction, science and adventure rank highest with boys, while the girls are interested in adult fiction and stories of home life."[1]

About twenty years later, George Norvell did extensive research into what adolescents read and view and where their interests and tastes seem to lie. In 1950, he published a twelve year study concluding that "sex is so dominant and ever-present a force in determining young people's reading choices that it must be carefully considered in planning any reading programs for the school."[2] His study also concluded that there is a slight change between junior and senior high school in the influence of sex on reading interests. He did agree with R. L. Thorndike who, in a 1941 study, concluded that "there is an increasing community of interest in reading between secondary school boys and girls with increasing age."[3]

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[1]Ibid., p. 293.

[2]George W. Norvell, The Reading Interests of Young People (Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., 1950), p. 47.

[3]Ibid., p. 48.

In 1967, G. Robert Carlsen, an expert in the field of adolescent literature, stated in his book entitled Books and the Teen-Age Reader:

> There is a real difference between what the teen-age boy and the teen-age girl want to read. By eighth grade, the reading interests of boys and girls are sharply differentiated. These differences will continue into adult life; for even at a mature reading level, men and women tend to select and appreciate different books. It is true that girls and women will frequently enjoy masculine stories, but boys and men will rarely enjoy feminine ones. Sex differences are reflected not only in the kind of story each usually prefers, but in the type of characters, the plot, the setting, and the unit within those kinds. Boys want the leading character to be masculine; girls will read about either sex.[1]

Four years later, Carlsen revised his book to reflect the changes in our society and in teen-agers. However, he did not change his opinion on this aspect of teen-age reading habits.

Dr. Lou Stanek, in a study completed in 1973, surveyed the reading interests of Illinois adolescents. Her study was not conducted to substantiate sex preference in book choice, but to see why a teen-ager reads and what specific adolescent novels were being read. The results of her research indicated that: "kids aren't reading as

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[1]G. Robert Carlsen, Books and the Teen-Age Reader (New York: Harper and Row, 1967; Bantam Books, 1967), p. 23.

much as they did a few years ago; girls are reading more adolescent novels than boys; and the only ones indiscriminately read by both are those adapted for the silver screen and cathode tube."[1] Four of the five first choices by adolescents in this study had been either movies or television films before the survey was conducted. Dr. Stanek's message to librarians and educators is "never underestimate the power of the telly or movie house."[2]

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[1]Lou Willet Stanek, "Real People, Real Books: About YA Readers," Top of the News 31 (June 1975): 424.

[2]Ibid., p. 420.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Population

The population involved in the study was the seventh, eighth, and ninth graders at Lake Dallas Junior High School.

Source of Data

The data used in this study were obtained from a reading list survey administered to the majority of the junior high population.

The following are the sources used in compiling the reading list survey:

1. "Adolescent Literature, Adolescent Reading, and the English Class." Arizona English Bulletin 14 (April 1972).

2. Campbell, Patty. "We Got There...It Was Worth the Trip! A Survey of YA Reading Interests in Los Angeles Public Library." Top of the News 30 (June 1974): 394-402.

3. Carlsen, G. Robert. Books and the Teen-Age Reader.

4. Edwards, Margaret. The Fair Garden and the Swarm of the Beasts.

5. "Still Alive in '75." Top of the News 32 (November 1975): 34-35.

6. "YA Favorites; Reading Profiles From Nine Hawaii Schools." Top of the News 30 (June 1974): 403-409.

Instrument

The reading interests survey is divided into three sections. The first section is a list of eighty-eight author-title selections. Ninety selections were originally planned, but in the printing process, two were not included. Students were to indicate by a plus sign those selections they have read and enjoyed, and by a minus sign those selections read but not enjoyed. Any selection that was read in Reading or English class was to be circled.

The second section consisted of three columns with the headings: School library, Public library, Personal copy. Students were asked to check one of these columns indicating the source of the book marked in Section I.

In the third section, students were asked to list one to four favorite books not mentioned on the reading list. The survey was concluded with this question: "Do you enjoy reading for pleasure?"

Assumptions

In the analysis of the data of this survey, it is assumed that information provided by the students is true and accurate. Students were instructed to mark only those books actually read and, within the capability of their memories, to check the source of each book.

Treatment of the Data

The data compiled in Sections I and II were treated by utilizing averages and percentages. The average age and total number of books read from the survey list were numerically computed. Percentages were used to indicate the number of students who enjoyed a certain book. Ten per cent was the cut-off number. A book read and enjoyed by less than ten per cent of the students in each grade and sex division is not considered significant in this survey. Selections read in class were eliminated for the appropriate grade levels. Also, percentages were utilized in calculating the information gathered concerning the possible sources of books.

Hypotheses

On the basis of the information provided by the related literature and other researchers, the following hypotheses are stated for this study:

1. There are dividing lines, however wobbly, between masculine and feminine adolescent leisure reading interests.

2. Adolescents today, in leisure time, despite other interests and activities, do enjoy reading.

3. The film industry and television do influence the selection of books by adolescents.

4. Adolescents today are not relying on the libraries primarily as sources of books for leisure reading.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This chapter will present information gathered from the reading interests survey administered to 172 seventh, eighth, and ninth graders, two of their teachers, and the school librarian. The school library was surveyed to ascertain the number of reading survey selections it contained.

The breakdown as to total number and average age is as follows in table 1:

TABLE 1

POPULATION BREAKDOWN

Grade	Sex	Number of Students	Average Age
9	M F	30 31	15.4 14.6
8	M F	27 27	13.5 13.7
7	M F	30 27	12.8 12.6
Total		172	--

The first section of the survey was designed to gather information about the books male and female students enjoyed reading and what selections they read for assignments. Table 2 presents data compiled showing the average number of books read from the selection list of eighty-eight titles. This number includes books that students enjoyed, did not enjoy, and those read for assignment.

TABLE 2

NUMBER OF BOOKS READ FROM READING INTERESTS SURVEY

Grade	Sex	Average Number Read	Per Cent Read
9	M	10.42	11.8
	F	15.53	17.6
8	M	9.48	10.7
	F	12.04	13.6
7	M	9.30	10.5
	F	8.77	9.6

The highest number read (15.53 books) was by the ninth grade girls and the lowest number read by the seventh grade girls (8.77). The data shows that with increasing age, male or female, more books were read from the selection list.

The following tables (3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8) present data compiled to show which specific books were enjoyed by each grade and sex. Books read for Reading or English classes have been eliminated. Since the ninth graders read To Kill A Mockingbird and Flowers for Algernon, these titles have not been computed. The selection Sounder had to be eliminated for eighth graders, also for ninth graders who read it previously. There were no titles circled by the seventh graders, indicating that none of the selections were read for assignments.

TABLE 3

BOOKS READ AND ENJOYED BY
NINTH GRADE BOYS

Titles	Per Cent Read and Enjoyed
Jaws	70
Born Free	43
Brian's Song	43
Island of the Blue Dolphin	36
Old Yeller	36
Summer of '42	36
Death Be Not Proud	33
The Exorcist	33
The Godfather	30
Brian Piccolo: A Short Season	26
Jonathon Livingston Seagull	26
Fantastic Voyage	23
I Am Third	16
Gone With the Wind	16
My Side of the Mountain	16
The Andromeda Strain	16
True Grit	16
Alive	13
Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman	13
Durango Street	13
2001: A Space Odyssey	13
All Creatures Great and Small	13
Call of the Wild	10
Cross and the Switchblade	10
Go Ask Alice	10
Love Story	10
Peanuts Treasury	10
Red Sky in the Morning	10
The Yearling	10

TABLE 4

BOOKS READ AND ENJOYED BY
NINTH GRADE GIRLS

Titles	Per Cent Read and Enjoyed
Born Free	70
Old Yeller	70
Go Ask Alice	67
Jaws	67
Lisa Bright and Dark	61
Island of the Blue Dolphin	51
Love Story	51
Summer of '42	51
Brian's Song	45
Death Be Not Proud	38
Jonathon Livingston Seagull	38
The Exorcist	38
Call of the Wild	35
Gone With the Wind	35
The Other Side of the Mountain	35
True Grit	29
Mr. & Mrs. Bo Jo Jones	25
To Sir With Love	25
Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman	22
Lilies of the Field	22
The Godfather	22
The Yearling	22
Alive	19
The Outsiders	19
2001: A Space Odyssey	19
I Never Promised You a Rose Garden	19
Savage Sam	19
Brian Piccolo: A Short Season	16
Fifteen	16
My Darling, My Hamburger	12
My Side of the Mountain	12

TABLE 5

BOOKS READ AND ENJOYED BY
EIGHTH GRADE BOYS

Titles	Per Cent Read and Enjoyed
Old Yeller	66
Island of the Blue Dolphin	59
Jaws	55
Born Free	44
Brian's Song	40
Death Be Not Proud	40
The Exorcist	37
Alive	37
Brian Piccolo: A Short Season	33
I Am Third	29
My Side of the Mountain	29
True Grit	29
Call of the Wild	25
Fantastic Voyage	25
Go Ask Alice	22
The Godfather	22
Peanuts Treasury	22
The Cross and the Switchblade	18
To Kill a Mockingbird	18
Love Story	14
2001: A Space Odyssey	14
The Andromeda Strain	14
The Other Side of the Mountain	14

TABLE 6

BOOKS READ AND ENJOYED BY
EIGHTH GRADE GIRLS

Titles	Per Cent Read and Enjoyed
Go Ask Alice	66
Jaws	66
Death Be Not Proud	62
Island of the Blue Dolphin	62
Old Yeller	62
Brian's Song	59
Lisa Bright and Dark	48
Born Free	44
Alive	33
Love Story	33
My Side of the Mountain	33
Summer of '42	33
The Other Side of the Mountain	29
Brian Piccolo: A Short Season	25
Jonathon Livingston Seagull	25
The Exorcist	25
Rebecca	22
Gone With the Wind	22
Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman	22
The Pigman	18
Fifteen	14
To Kill a Mockingbird	14
2001: A Space Odyssey	14

TABLE 7

BOOKS READ AND ENJOYED BY
SEVENTH GRADE BOYS

Titles	Per Cent Read and Enjoyed
Old Yeller	83
My Side of the Mountain	66
Jaws	53
Born Free	50
Sounder	46
Alive	36
Brian's Song	36
Island of the Blue Dolphin	36
True Grit	30
Savage Sam	26
Summer of '42	26
Gone With the Wind	23
Peanuts Treasury	20
The Other Side of the Mountain	20
Call of the Wild	16
Brian Piccolo: A Short Season	16
Fear Strikes Out: The Jim Piersal Story	16
The Godfather	16
Death Be Not Proud	13
Go Ask Alice	13
Jonathon Livingston Seagull	13
I Am Third	13
To Kill a Mockingbird	13
Love Story	10
One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest	10
The Exorcist	10
The Cross and the Switchblade	10
2001: A Space Odyssey	10

TABLE 8

BOOKS READ AND ENJOYED BY
SEVENTH GRADE GIRLS

Titles	Per Cent Read and Enjoyed
Jaws	59
Island of the Blue Dolphin	55
Old Yeller	51
Sounder	48
Alive	44
Born Free	40
My Side of the Mountain	37
Death Be Not Proud	33
Go Ask Alice	33
Gone With the Wind	33
Summer of '42	33
Brian's Song	29
Love Story	25
Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman	22
The Godfather	22
The Exorcist	22
Call of the Wild	18
The Other Side of the Mountain	18
To Kill a Mockingbird	18
Fear Strikes Out: The Jim Piersal Story	14

Table 9 presents the data concerning the possible sources for books read in leisure time. Students were instructed to treat the School Library column as their own school library and the Public Library column as any local public library. Denton, Lewisville, Dallas, Lake Dallas, Sanger, and Gainesville were some of the locations indicated by the students as the source of books. The Personal Copy column represented any book owned personally or borrowed from family or friends.

TABLE 9

SOURCE OF BOOKS

Grade	Sex	Per Cent School Library	Per Cent Public Library	Per Cent Personal Copy
9	M	36.36	14.47	49.15
	F	31.84	12.97	57.54
8	M	43.06	10.56	51.19
	F	33.54	6.60	59.81
7	M	29.32	16.17	54.51
	F	34.49	14.41	51.09
Average		33.84	12.32	53.83

Table 10 presents data compiled from Section III of the survey. Students were asked to respond to the question: "Do you enjoy reading for pleasure?"

TABLE 10

READING FOR PLEASURE

Grade	Sex	Per Cent Yes	Per Cent No	Per Cent No Response
9	M	76.7	23.3	--
	F	80.6	19.4	--
8	M	89.0	3.5	7.5
	F	85.0	7.5	7.5
7	M	83.3	16.7	--
	F	74.1	27.9	--
Average		81.4	16.4	7.5

Students were also asked in this section to list other favorite books not included on the reading list. There were many different responses and tables 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 present this data.

The school library was surveyed for the availability of the selections on the reading survey list. Of the eighty-eight selections, 68.18 per cent were on the library's shelves.

Two Lake Dallas teachers and the school librarian were also surveyed to discover if they had read the selections on the survey list. The seventh and eighth grade English teacher had read 21 per cent of the books. The seventh and eighth grade Reading teacher had read 42 per cent of the selections and the librarian had read 27.2 per cent of the titles. The ninth grade English teacher was ill and did not participate in this survey.

TABLE 11

"WRITE-IN" TITLES: NINTH GRADE BOYS

Titles	Number of Responses
Tom Sawyer	3
Huckleberry Finn	2
Limbo of the Lost	2
Motocross Action	2
Science Fiction Robot	2
The Great Race	2
Peanuts	2
Batter Up	1
Childhood	1
Dirty Harry	1
Dirt Bike	1
Charlie Brown	1
New Twilight Zone	1
White Dawn	1
Strange but True Baseball Stories	1
Engine Co. 82	1
Patton	1
Rich Man, Poor Man	1
Mr. Cool Bart Starr	1
Project Earth	1
Land of the Lost	1
The Pearl	1
In the Presence of My Enemies	1
Shot Down Over North Vietnam	1
Hardy Boys	1
Sherlock Holmes' Great Mysteries	1
Sharks Treasure	1
Sink the Bismark	1
Robinson Crusoe	1
The Hidden Door	1
Devil's Triangle	1
Football	1
Indy 500	1
20,000 Leagues Under the Sea	1
The Fat Cat	1

TABLE 12

"WRITE-IN" TITLES: NINTH GRADE GIRLS

Titles	Number of Responses
Once Is Not Enough	4
Airport	3
Towering Inferno	2
Sound of Music	2
The Way We Were	2
Box Car Children	1
Centennial	1
Daughter of the Mountain	1
Earthquake	1
Message to My Daughter	1
The Last Summer	1
The Happy Hooker	1
Penny & Pam	1
Valley of the Dolls	1
Richie	1
That Was Then This Is Now	1
The Girls of Huntington House	1
Where the Red Fern Grows	1
Witch of Blackbird Pond	1
The Cat Ate My Gym Suit	1
Where the Lilies Bloom	1
Look Through My Window	1
Saddle Up	1
Sybil	1
The Secret Garden	1
A Long Way Home From Troy	1

TABLE 13

"WRITE-IN" TITLES: EIGHTH GRADE BOYS

Titles	Number of Responses
Stauback	5
Charlotte's Web	3
North Dallas Forty	3
Football Stars 1975	2
Pro Football	2
Black Beauty	2
Helter Skelter	2
Soul Brothers and Sister Lou	1
All About Motorcycles	1
Star Quarterbacks of the NFL	1
Huckleberry Finn	1
Shadow on the Ice	1
Joe Paterno: Football for Fun	1
Incredible Journey	1
Olympic Games	1
Outer Space Connection	1
Chariots of the Gods	1
Space Cadet	1
Midway	1
A Night to Remember	1
To Reach the Stars	1
My Son Joe	1
Cadet Quarterback	1
Super Bowl	1
Secret of the Lost Tunnel	1
The Silent World	1
Inside the Atom	1
Ellery Queen	1
National Velvet	1
Thunderhead	1
Doc Savage Meets the Werewolf	1
Fellowship of the Rings	1
Guadalcanal	1
Guiness Book of World Records	1

TABLE 14

"WRITE-IN" TITLES: EIGHTH GRADE GIRLS

Titles	Number of Responses
Summer of the Swans	3
The Mystery of the Crimson Ghost	3
Carrie	2
Helen Keller	2
Incredible Journey	2
The Shadow Castle	2
Witch of Blackbird Pond	2
The Reincarnation of Peter Proud	2
Limbo of the Lost	1
Where the Red Fern Grows	1
Where the Lilies Bloom	1
Run Baby Run	1
North Dallas Forty	1
The Lovebug	1
A Quiet Place	1
Forever Free	1
Living Tree	1
Tom Sawyer	1
Huckleberry Finn	1
Are You There God? It's Me Margaret	1
A Cat Ate My Gym Suit	1
Legends of Sleepy Hollow	1
For All the Wrong Reasons	1
That Was Then This Is Now	1
The Spirit Is Willing	1
Listen for the Fig Tree	1
The Day the World Ended	1
P.S. You're Not Listening	1
Don't Cry for Me	1
Sybil	1
Helter Skelter	1
Penny Candy	1
Super Cops	1
A Sound of Crying	1
Prelude to Mars	1
Nancy Drew	1
Kids Do the Strangest Things	1
Charlotte's Web	1
Smokey	1

TABLE 15

"WRITE-IN" TITLES: SEVENTH GRADE BOYS

Titles	Number of Responses
Tom Sawyer	3
Escape to Witch Mountain	2
Huckleberry Finn	2
Pro Football Heroes	2
OJ--The Education of a Rich Rookie	2
Star Running Backs of the NFL	2
Hardy Boys	2
The Flight of the Dove	1
The Day the World Went Away	1
A Time to Hurt and a Time to Heal	1
A Man Called Noon	1
Rich Man, Poor Man	1
The Cycle Jumpers	1
Le Mans	1
Break for the Basket	1
Treasure Island	1
The House of Stairs	1
Blitz	1
Roundup of Horses	1
How to Ride and Rope	1
Animals of North America	1
Leave It to Henry	1
Super Bowl	1
Journey to the Center of the Earth	1
When the Worlds Collide	1
After the Worlds Collide	1
Revolt on Alfa Century IV	1
Lassie in Alaska	1
20,000 Leagues Under the Sea	1
Frankenstein	1
Rock Superstars	1
Oklahoma Crude	1
The Rookies	1
The Sting	1
Deliverance	1
Lost in the Wilderness	1
Ice Station Zebra	1
Benji	1
Stormy Misty Foal	1
Forest Fire Mystery	1

TABLE 16

"WRITE-IN" TITLES: SEVENTH GRADE GIRLS

Titles	Number of Responses
My Friend Flicka	4
Green Grass of Wyoming	4
Incredible Journey	3
Wild Mustang	2
National Velvet	2
Black Beauty	2
Rich Man, Poor Man	2
King of the Wind	2
Huckleberry Finn	1
Call It Courage	1
The Seven Cousins	1
Smokey	1
Miss Hickory	1
Witch of Blackbird Pond	1
Walking Tall	1
Benji	1
Stormy Misty Foal	1
Come One, Seabiscuit	1
Swampfire	1
Thunderhead	1
The Play Makers	1
Wild Horses	1
Mystery Horses	1
Amos Fortune, Free Man	1
Follow My Leader	1
Sharks Treasure	1
Queenie Peevy	1
Willie Mays	1
Day of the Dolphins	1
The Big Sky	1
Deer Run	1
The Shadow in the Pines	1
The Dream That Still Comes Back	1
Wooden Doll	1
Haunted Bookstore	1
Charlotte's Web	1

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings and Conclusions

Based upon the study of the data concerning the reading interests survey, it was found that Lake Dallas students have read and enjoyed only a portion of the selections on the survey. Ninth graders had read the highest number (males=11.8 per cent, females=17.6 per cent). The seventh graders read even less selections than the eighth graders.

There are four possible explanations for this occurrence: (1) With increasing age, adolescents have been exposed to more types of literature and a larger number of books; (2) This list of eighty-eight selections, considered popular adolescent reading by experts in the Young Adult Literature field and surveys completed in Arizona, Illinois, Hawaii, and Los Angeles, does not truly reflect the reading interests of adolescents in a small Texas community; (3) Some of the selections included on the survey list may be more appealing to maturer young

adults; and (4) Lake Dallas has an all white population, which may explain why so few students have read the Black experience books on the survey list.

In analyzing the data showing which specific books were enjoyed by each grade and sex, one obvious trend is that Lake Dallas students are indeed influenced by the movie theatre and the television in their choice of books for leisure reading. Jaws was read and enjoyed by 65.5 per cent of the total students surveyed. It was read indiscriminately by boys and girls on each grade level. Born Free, Old Yeller, Brian's Song, and Death Be Not Proud, to name a few, were read by most students. Death Be Not Proud, a movie produced for television, was shown a few months ago in this area. The Lake Dallas teachers and librarian who participated in this study stated that this book began circulating soon after the movie was aired. The Exorcist, although not as popular as the titles mentioned above, was also read indiscriminately by both sexes. Thirty-eight per cent of the ninth grade girls and 33 per cent of the boys read and enjoyed it. It was less popular with the seventh and eighth graders.

The data of this study does not reflect totally the views stated in the related literature concerning the sex preferences of adolescents in their choice of leisure

reading. Lake Dallas students, male and female, are reading and enjoying many of the same books. As previously stated, they are reading indiscriminately books that have been made into movies.

One book that was decidedly read and enjoyed by more girls than boys is Go Ask Alice. Of the female population, 67 per cent of the ninth graders, 66 per cent of the eighth graders, and 33 per cent of the seventh graders have read it. On the other hand, 10 per cent of the ninth grade males, 22 per cent of the eighth graders, and 13 per cent of the seventh graders indicated that they enjoyed reading this selection. Two factors may have influenced the male interest in this book: the subject, drugs, and the fact that Go Ask Alice has been made into a television movie.

Lisa, Bright and Dark is another title that is more popular with females. Sixty-one per cent of the ninth grade girls and 48 per cent of the eighth grade girls have read it. However, it was read and enjoyed by less than 10 per cent of the seventh grade girls and all the boys surveyed.

The data gathered from the survey list indicates that sex preference is more prevalent in the choices of

books by the ninth graders. With a few exceptions, the seventh and eighth graders seem to be reading and enjoying the same books.

Sex differences in the choice of books is more evident in data collected in Section III of the survey. The "write-in" titles do give a slight indication of what girls and boys are reading at Lake Dallas. An analysis by subject, grade, and sex indicates that:

1. Ninth grade girls are reading romances and popular adult fiction. The boys are enjoying books on sports, cars, motorcycles, war, mysteries, science fiction, and adventure and suspense.

2. Eighth grade girls indicated titles on a variety of subjects and on several reading levels. They are reading mysteries, animal stories, adolescent novels, adventure and suspense, non-fiction, and historical fiction. Eighth grade boys are reading sports books, especially those about football, adventure and suspense, and science fiction.

3. Seventh grade girls are primarily interested in animal stories, especially those dealing with horses; they also read mysteries, adventure and suspense, and popular adult fiction. The boys are reading sports books,

science fiction, adventure and suspense, mysteries, and animal stories.

The students' response to the survey question "Do you enjoy reading for pleasure" is heartening for librarians and teachers. An average of 81.4 per cent of the 172 students answered yes to this question. The data indicates that by a slight percentage, more seventh and eighth grade males than females enjoy leisure reading. Some students added personal comments to this question such as: "I enjoy it sometimes," "I like to read for pleasure, but not for school," and "I read when there's nothing better to do."

Another important finding of the survey is that almost 54 per cent of the students are either purchasing or borrowing the books they read. The school library does contain 68 per cent of the selections on the list. However, students stated that this library was the source of less than 34 per cent of the books they read on the survey list. Popular titles such as Jaws, Alive, The Godfather, My Side of the Mountain, and The Other Side of the Mountain are not in the school library which indicates that students are getting their books from other sources.

The fact that the Lake Dallas community does not have an adequate public library is reflected in the data. Only 12 per cent indicated that they use a public library

as source of leisure reading material. For students patronizing the public library, Denton (Emily Fowler) and Lewisville are the usual choices. Lake Dallas students do participate in the TAB paperback book club program. The teachers stated that this program is very popular with adolescents on all grade levels.

In view of the data presented and treated in the study, it is concluded that:

1. At Lake Dallas Junior High School, the results of the reading survey show that the dividing lines between masculine and feminine reading interests are not clear-cut. Boys and girls alike are enjoying books that have been made into movies or shown on television. However, sex preferences are indicated in the analysis of the data concerning the "write-in" choices.

2. Lake Dallas students do enjoy reading as a leisure activity.

3. The film industry and television are important influences on these adolescents in their choice of books.

4. Lake Dallas students are purchasing or borrowing books more often than they are using the school library or the public library.

Recommendations

After careful analysis of data collected in this survey, the following recommendations have been made for librarians and educators who are able to influence and promote the leisure reading interests and activities of adolescents:

1. Librarians and teachers alike should promote reading as a leisure activity. Through various techniques such as book talks, book displays, posters, and other promotional material, the librarian can publicize what the library has to offer in order to spark the adolescent's interest in recreational reading. By scheduling frequent visits to the school and/or public library, teachers can promote leisure reading and assist students in the selection of reading materials.

2. The popularity of paperbacks should not be overlooked by librarians. A well-stocked, browsable paperback collection will increase circulation and adolescent interest in leisure reading, as well as to expose students to some of the best of adolescent and adult fiction.

3. In selecting books for adolescents, librarians and teachers should keep in mind the wobbly boundary lines between masculine and feminine reading interests. Sex

preferences still exist, but, as the data in this survey indicated, many boys and girls do enjoy reading the same books.

4. Since over 80 per cent of the students indicated that they do enjoy reading for pleasure, occasional class time should be allotted for leisure reading. Students who have little free time to read outside of school will have the opportunity to enjoy reading a book for relaxation, escape, and for other positive literary values.

5. Since the film industry and television do influence an adolescent's choice of leisure reading material, librarians and teachers should take advantage of this appeal. Librarians should be aware of those books that have been made into successful films and purchase in paperback or hardbound a few copies of the most popular and well-written titles. In the classroom, teachers can initiate group discussion of books that have been made into films, noting various differences in characterizations, plot, and setting. There are numerous creative writing activities that could be centered around a book which has been produced as a television film or motion picture to stimulate the student's interest in leisure reading.

Although this survey was conducted in a small Texas community, with only 172 adolescent participants, the data does reflect certain reading trends that Young Adult librarians and teachers across the country are observing and writing about. In general, the adolescent today who does enjoy reading as a leisure activity will most likely choose a paperback and his choice of reading materials will be influenced greatly by his peer group and by the television and motion picture industry.

APPENDIX

READING INTERESTS SURVEY

Directions:
Put a plus sign if you have read and enjoyed the following books; put a minus sign if you read but did not enjoy the book. Circle any title read for assignment.

Age _____ M F
Grade _____
School _____

AUTHOR TITLE	SCHOOL LIBRARY	PUBLIC LIBRARY	PERSONAL COPY
____ 1. Hinton. THE OUTSIDERS			
____ 2. GO ASK ALICE			
____ 3. Segal. LOVE STORY			
____ 4. Head. MR. & MRS. BO JO JONES			
____ 5. Cormier. THE CHOCOLATE WAR			
____ 6. Zindel. THE PIGMAN			
____ 7. " MY DARLING, MY HAMBURGER			
____ 8. Puzo. THE GODFATHER			
____ 9. Vonnegut. SLAUGHTERHOUSE FIVE			
____ 10. Read. ALIVE			
____ 11. Sayers. I AM THIRD			
____ 12. BRIAN'S SONG			
____ 13. Sherburne. TOO BAD ABOUT THE HAINES GIRL			
____ 14. Armstrong. SOUNDER			
____ 15. Barrett. LILIES OF THE FIELD			
____ 16. Lipsyte. THE CONTENDER			
____ 17. Bonham. DURANGO STREET			
____ 18. Heller. CATCH 22			
____ 19. Hentoff. I'M DRAGGED BUT NOTHING GETS ME DOWN			
____ 20. Benchley. JAWS			
____ 21. Felson. HOT ROD; CRASH CLUB			
____ 22. Clarke. 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY			
____ 23. Green. I NEVER PROMISED YOU A ROSE GARDEN			
____ 24. Wojciechowka. TUNED OUT			
____ 25. Raucher. SUMMER OF '42			
____ 26. Lee. TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD			

AUTHOR-TITLE	SCHOOL LIBRARY	PUBLIC LIBRARY	PERSONAL COPY
____ 28. O'Dell. ISLAND OF THE BLUE DOLPHIN			
____ 29. Eyerly. BONNIE JO, GO HOME			
____ 30. Braithwaite. TO SIR WITH LOVE			
____ 31. Gunther. DEATH BE NOT PROUD			
____ 32. Tolkien. THE HOBBIT; LORD OF THE RINGS			
____ 33. Neufeld. LISA BRIGHT AND DARK			
____ 34. Keyes. FLOWERS FOR ALGERNON (CHARLY)			
____ 35. Marshall. CHRISTY			
____ 36. Wilkerson. THE CROSS AND THE SWITCHBLADE			
____ 37. Kingman. THE PETER PAN BAG			
____ 38. Crichton. THE ANDROMEDA STRAIN			
____ 39. Annixter. SWIFTWATER			
____ 40. Adamson. BORN FREE			
____ 41. Stolz. TO TELL YOUR LOVE; PRAY LOVE, REMEMBER			
____ 42. Tunis. GO TEAM GO! HIS ENEMY, HIS FRIEND			
____ 43. Mitchell. GONE WITH THE WIND			
____ 44. Adams. WATERSHIP DOWN			
____ 45. Gibson. OLD YELLER			
____ 46. Freedman. MRS. MIKE			
____ 47. DuMaurier. REBECCA			
____ 48. Asimov. FANTASTIC VOYAGE			
____ 49. Knowles. A SEPARATE PEACE			
____ 50. Buck. THE GOOD EARTH			
____ 51. London. CALL OF THE WILD			
____ 52. John Christopher's WHITE MOUNTAIN trilogy			
____ 53. Sherburne. JENNIFER			
____ 54. Robb White. DEATHWATCH; UP PERISCOPE			
____ 55. Westheimer. VON RYAN'S EXPRESS			
____ 56. Burdick. FAIL-SAFE			
____ 57. Cleary. FIFTEEN			

AUTHOR-TITLE	SCHOOL LIBRARY	PUBLIC LIBRARY	PERSONAL COPY
____ 59. George. MY SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN			
____ 60. Frazier. ROCKIN' STEADY			
____ 61. Schultz. PEANUTS TREASURY			
____ 62. Dizenzo. PHOEBE			
____ 63. Ferber. GIANT			
____ 64. Gaines. AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MISS JANE PITTMAN			
____ 65. Herriott. ALL CREATURES GREAT AND SMALL			
____ 66. AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF MALCOLM X			
____ 67. Blatty. THE EXORCIST			
____ 68. Herbert. DUNE			
____ 69. Rawlings. THE YEARLING			
____ 70. Bradford. RED SKY AT MORNING			
____ 71. Gibson. SAVAGE SAM			
____ 72. THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN			
____ 73. Bach. JONATHON LIVINGSTON SEAGULL			
____ 74. Morris. BRIAN PICCOLO: A SHORT SEASON			
____ 75. FEAR STRIKES OUT: THE JIM PIERSAL STORY			
____ 76. Portis. TRUE GRIT			
____ 77. Childress. A HERO AIN'T NOTHIN' BUT A SANDWICH			
____ 78. Salinger. THE CATCHER IN THE RYE			
____ 79. Kesey. ONE FLEW OVER THE CUKOO'S NEST			
____ 80. M. Stewart. THE MOON-SPINNERS; AIRS ABOVE THE GROUND; THIS ROUGH MAGIC			
____ 81. Heinlein. FARMER IN THE SKY; HAVE SPACE SUIT WILL TRAVEL; THE MOON IS A HARSH MISTRESS			
____ 82. INSTANT REPLAY			

PLEASE LIST BELOW OTHER FAVORITES NOT INCLUDED IN THE ABOVE GROUP.

1. _____ 2. _____

3. _____ 4. _____

DO YOU ENJOY READING FOR PLEASURE? yes no

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING IN THIS SURVEY!

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